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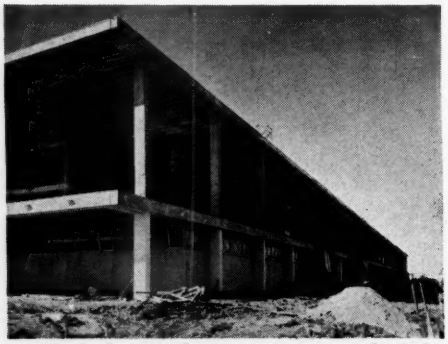

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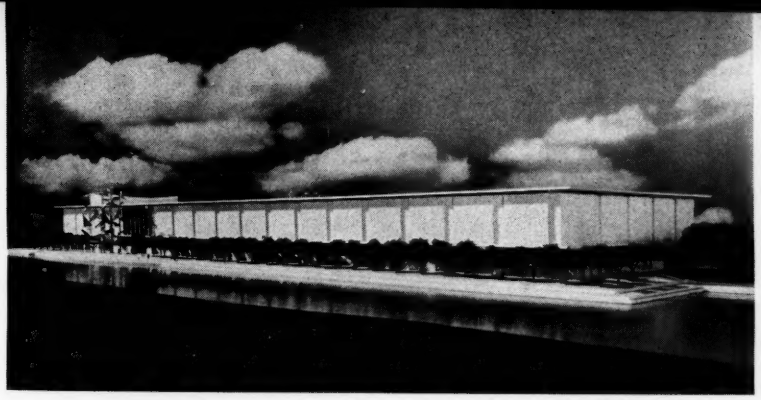

Chicago's Own Exposition Center – McCormick Place

inland architect

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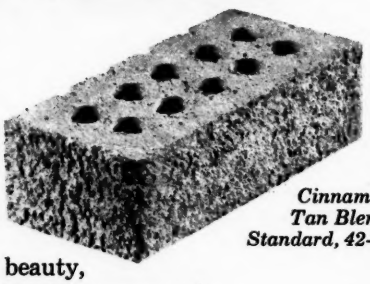

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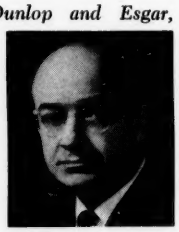
MEETINGS

Chicago Chapter Elects

At its annual meeting held June 13th in the Saddle and Cycle Club the Chicago Chapter elected R. Rea Esgar President for the coming year. Mr. Esgar is



R. Rea Esgar—Dunlop and Esgar, native of Montana, has served the chapter and the Institute in many capacities. He has been an INLAND ARCHITECT columnist.

with the firm of Dunlop and Esgar, has been active on the Chicago Board of Directors for many years and has also served on Institute committees.

Jack Train—Perkins and Will, has been a Chapter member since '53. He has served on two Chapter committees and two national committees. He is a registered engineer.

Elected to serve with Mr. Esgar were: Jack D. Train, first vice-president; Walter H. Sobel, second vice-president; James D. Arkin, secretary; and Paul D. McCurry, treasurer.

Walter H. Sobel—Has his own practice in Chicago. He has previously served the Chapter as an officer and Director and has handled the refresher course for five years.

William A. Bachman retiring president will continue to serve on the Board as a Director and will also be active as Institute Regional Director in Illinois, a post to which he was elected at the recent convention in Philadelphia.

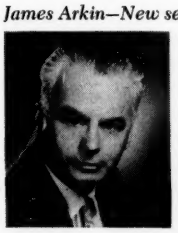
Newly elected directors are Gerald M. West and Thomas E. Cooke, three years, and Carl A. Metz, one year. Edward L. Burch, Richard E. Carlson, and Charles Catlin, were elected to

William Bachman—Bachman & Bertram, Hammond, Ind. Has been an officer or director of the Chicago Chapter for the past 8 years and a delegate to National convention each year since 1953.

two year terms as delegates to the Architects Association of Illinois.

Paul McCurry—Schmidt, Garden and Erickson, was reelected. He is a graduate of IIT and has previously served as chairman of two Chapter committees.

Kenneth McGrew, Lee Mielke and Herbert Sobel continue as directors and Robert Ward, Duane B. Rowe, Edward H. Matthei and Robert Picking continue as delegates to the AAI.



James Arkin—New secretary is a native of Pennsylvania and has served as a Professor of Architecture. He is currently with Chicago's City Planning Dept.

Women's Architectural League New Officers

Mrs. Walter Sobel will serve another year as president of the Women's Architectural League. Mrs. Ray Stuermer will serve as second vice president for another year and Mrs. William Dunlap as corresponding secretary. At a recent meeting held at the Kungsholm new officers were elected to serve for the next two years: Mrs. Edgar J. Manning as first vice president (scholarship), Mrs. Harry G. Marggraf, third vice president (membership), Mrs. Lee C. Mielke, recording secretary, Mrs. Ernest Matthews, treasurer.

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A New Silhouette on Our Horizon

by Louis E. Fideler, AIA

■ On a cold winter morning in January of 1959, the first spade of earth was turned on the site at 22nd Street and the lake. Some weeks short of two years later, McCormick Place opened its doors to the public to become the World's largest exposition hall. It is most unfortunate that Colonel Robert R. McCormick, Editor and Publisher of the *Chicago Tribune,* was not with us to see his vision become a reality. Mr. McCormick, who died April 1, 1955, was the original creator of the idea of Chicago's own exposition hall. His memory will live on throughout time as McCormick Place is visited by people from the world over.

In 1957, the Metropolitan Fair and Exposition Authority was formed for the purposes of gathering the necessary information to make this project become a reality. This organization was guided under the leadership of Mr. David Mayer, Jr., a chairman of the authority. MFEA researched into the need and scope of an exposition hall and selected the site after much deliberation and objections from citizens, business men, and politicians. Mr. Alfred Shaw, chief Architect for the project, was in complete accord with such a choice of site.

When Mr. Shaw was asked by members of the MFEA to design McCormick Place, Shaw, realizing the scope of this project, deliberated twenty-four hours before giving his answer. During this time, he consulted with his partners in Shaw, Metz and Associates, and, informally, with Mr. Mayer, Chairman of the Authority. As chief Architect for the project, he invited other associates to participate, his good friends Edward Stone, John Root, and Victor Hofer. Mr. Stone and Mr. Root were consultants on design, Mr. Metz was the chief Structural Engineer. Mr. Dolio was responsible for the mechanical engineering and Mr. Hofer from Mr. Ralph Burke's office was in charge of site planning. Mr. Edward J. Lee, the general manager of McCormick Place became a member of the design team.

Mr. Shaw and his associates surveyed the facilities that would be needed at McCormick Place, in size and scope. The group visited exposition and convention centers throughout the nation. Shaw and his staff consulted with exhibitors. Statistics were provided in relation to areas required for fairs, conventions and exhibits. It was decided that the building should be located on the lake front, with traffic arterials along the inland side. It would be a rectangular building with the entire main exhibit space on a single floor. The exhibit area would have a minimum number of columns and a ceiling height 40 feet high. The supporting facilities, such as restaurants and a dining terrace, smaller exhibit areas, and conference rooms, would be placed below the main floor. Still a lower level would include

kitchens and utility areas, such as garages and storage rooms.

The theater, the largest in Chicago, with 5,000 seats was designed to fit neatly into the structural pattern at the south end of McCormick Place. The theater, in spite of its great size, achieves an intimate effect because of it's simplicity in design and serene decor. Equipment used in the theater is the most advanced in the country. Only RCA in New York can rival it. The control room is strategically placed beneath the balcony, in which operators can handle every lighting and sound effect. The projection room can handle the latest in wide screen, technicolor films. The stage is equipped with the most complete and modern theatrical equipment. From the two side stages, auto, boats, and other heavy equipment can be moved on stage with a minimum of effort.

The building is principally steel frame covered with the concrete curtain walls. Foundations are "H" piles driven to bedrock. The roof is poured gypsum on bulb tees and form boards. Floors are principally concrete and terrazzo. Walls are masonry glass or tile. Materials were wisely chosen for permanence, ease of maintenance, and decorative effects. The project was built on a smooth schedule on time in spite of the five month steel strike.

The main exposition hall can be divided into three areas for smaller exhibits. This is done by the largest doors in the world. 40 feet in height and 340 feet wide. The exposition hall is a windowless expanse. Windows were eliminated because most exhibitors prefer to do their own lighting and felt windows with views would detract from the exhibits. However, on the restaurant level, the walls are practically solid glass to offer the diners a scenic view of the lake.

The exterior building panels are composed of precast concrete panels adorned with sculptured murals executed by Constantina Nivola. The building boasts four times as much sculptured area as is on the exteriors of the legendary temples of Karnak in Egypt.

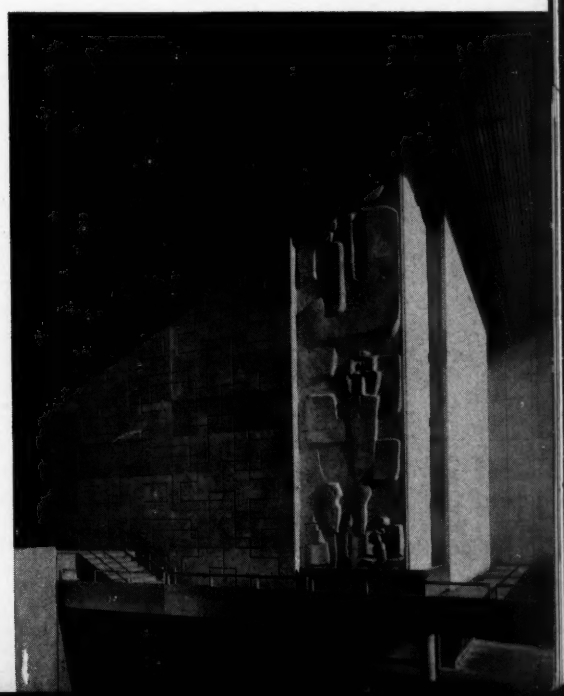
One unusual service feature is the truck loading facilities where fifty trailer trucks may park abreast and load or unload simultaneously. This permits very rapid change of exhibitors and shows. Large parking areas surrounding McCormick Place can accommodate the multitude of trucks and autos.

McCormick Place was financed from taxes on parimutuel racings, state bonds, and some private investors. The building cost 34 million dollars and experts predict its use will generate an extra 225 million dollars in business for Chicago.

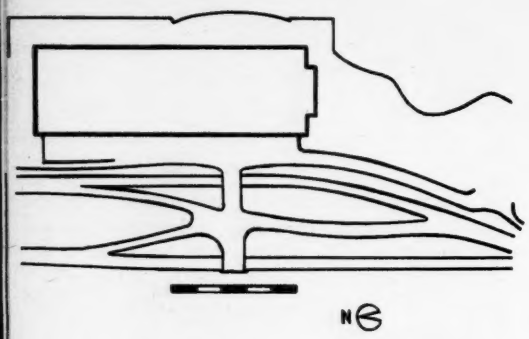
Since having opened its doors, McCormick Place has been host to quite a variety of trade shows, conventions, exhibits, and mass meetings. The place has bookings for many years ahead and has been a tremendous commercial success.

The evidence of the exposition hall is quite apparent as seen from the air and from its approaches on Lake Shore Drive. Its visual impact is tremendous, particularly its softly ornamented facade is a pleasant change from a city that seems to be heavy in glass curtain wall. All people in the Chicago area and surrounding states will at some time use the facilities of our great McCormick Place.

The most unusual quality about the building, I believe, is its lack of fad and gimmicks. I think its pure utilitarian and decorative design will withstand the mark of time. Fifty years from now it will seem just as appropriate as our other great buildings. □



This detail shows sculptured concrete panels—a major contribution to the esthetics of McCormick Place.



Solving the Problem

by Alfred Shaw, FAIA

This article is based on a talk given by Alfred Shaw, Shaw, Metz and Associates, Architects for McCormick Place, given before the Chicago Chapter, American Institute of Architects.

■ What we observe in a building, the effect it has on all of us, is so much more important than what we say about it. What the architect or the engineer builds and its effect, as environment, on anybody is its high function and is more important than what the architect can possibly say in words. However, it might be interesting to review some of the thinking and problems that entered into the creation of this structure.

First, a great mass of data, including the original feasibility report, had to be reviewed in the light of developing improvements, in the field of exposition buildings. Revisions and decisions had to be made, sketches had to be drawn and revised and these processes of critical improvement and development in the drawings and specifications took place continuously both before, during and after their completion.

The board of the Metropolitan Fair & Exposition Authority took advantage of the opportunity offered by the Chicago Park District to take this great site so close to the Loop and develop it. This decision had been made before our assignment and actual studies on the work had begun.

With the locale determined the areas for the complex and varied facilities has to be agreed on and coordinated and graphically represented on drawings for review. The site planning involving the space and location of the structure was part and parcel of the traffic plan and traffic patterns. Not only for access and egress, but to avoid interference with the present north and south drives.

The main structure could be placed with drives on both sides or on one side and the fact that there was a major connection to the west at 23rd Street did not simplify the problem. It became increasingly clear that the unique opportunity of having certain facilities such as reception rooms, restaurants, etc., right on the lake was extremely desirable and there was a natural advantage to be gained by having the highways west of the main structure. This plan was adopted.

In all of these problems (and none of them was trifling for a project of this size), we had to work, sometimes at great length, with the State Highway Commission, the Park District, the City of Chicago, the Bureau of Public Works and Streets and though we were stymied from time to time, we were always able to sweat out an answer.

Coming to the building again, the largest and most significant requirement in area was for trade fairs, exhibitions and auto shows—what we call the "exhibit area." After considering similar facilities throughout the country, this figure was placed, by general agreement, at 300,000 square feet.

The next requirement was the size and location of the supporting facilities (meeting rooms, storage facilities, dining rooms, etc.) and these areas totaled out to be roughly the equal of the exhibit area.

The many subsidiary services and mechanical areas were located in workable areas as proximity and space permitted.

Space a Problem

The land area under lease, 13½ acres, was not unlimited and a one-story structure left no outside areas for recreation and parking. Horizontal distance became enormous so it was obvious that a scheme having many stairs between two levels would be better, one level to be 20 feet above the lake and the other 40 feet above the lake was our solution and, thus, we did not break up the 300,000 square feet of exhibition area. This was placed in one single, dramatic unit except, of course, that it can be divided into three areas by gigantic aluminum doors.

On the lower level, fan rooms, service rooms, restaurants, public lobbies, offices, concessions, galleries could then be planned in proper relation to each other instead of being split by the great exhibit area.

This two-level scheme also gave us over 1,000 feet of loading and unloading platform on each floor, giving adequate arrival and departure space for taxis, busses and cars.

The desirability of having the theatre accessible from both levels was also solved by slanting the main floor of the theatre off the public lobby and the one balcony off the exhibit area above. Thus, giving a solution which permits the theatre to be

used directly from the high exhibit area or just as conveniently from the public lobby and restaurants on the lower level.

The natural attractiveness of the lakefront indicated that the restaurants, ballrooms, reception rooms, and cafeteria should be on the north and east sides with their pleasant views of the city and the lake. This lower level, which opens onto the terrace on the lake side will be open at all times to the public whether or not there are activities in the theatre or exhibit area, and provides recreational and cultural facilities which are a fundamental part of our concept of the project.

We should talk a little about the exterior and how we came to this design. As management was developing, even early in the game, working out problems with the great national show people, it became apparent that they wanted only their own planned lighting – not daylight. This meant walls without windows. This could have been a dreary prospect because of the scale of the building. Our first device to break up this potential dullness was to offset the walls (some inside a straight line of columns and some outside). This gave us a rhythm along the 1,000 foot elevations which was further enhanced by the added contrast of sculpture. Working with Mr. Costantino Nivola, a sculptor of great imagination and genius, we gave a light texture to the offset panels and a heavier sculptured texture to those on the inset. This also gave us an opportunity to dramatize the building with floodlights after dark. The only way to pay for this vast area of sculpture was in some cast material. The low bidder did some real pioneering with the fabrication of these panels—a unique and a first in construction. They are sandwiches—15′ x 4′6″ x 8″ thick. The bread part is concrete with a white quartz aggregate on the exterior side and the meat part is foam glass for insulation.

The relation this project has, even in its great size, to any further planning in Chicago, is the fact that it "got done." It could have been smaller, less expensive, less efficient, less attractive, but we didn't think so nor did our client and with hard work, it is here! □

Owner Says Architects Are Not Psychologists

by Betty J. Ritter

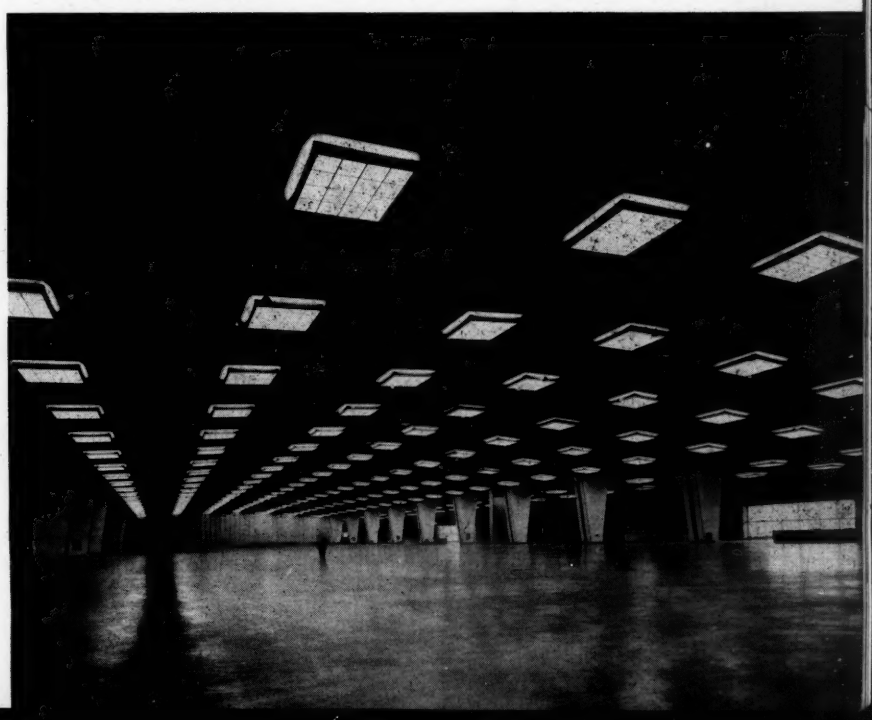
■ In an effort to evaluate McCormick Place from the point of view of the "owner," Edward J. Lee, general manager of the lake front exposition center, was asked for his comments on Chicago's newest showplace.

Lee is convinced that the lake front site, away from the main business section, was a sound choice. An exposition, trade show, or convention may require delivery of up to 1,800 truckloads of equipment and this would create a serious congestion problem if the site were in, or close to, the downtown area.

If the land and a magic wand were available, Lee felt he would prefer a basically square plan rather than the present oblong shape. The length of walk from the parking areas is a problem; a square plan would permit parking to surround the building, eliminating visitors' pedestrian woes. To alleviate the problem, since no magic wand is in sight, McCormick Place management provides shuttle buses when necessary to assist visitors.

Lee estimated that for an event involving out of town visitors, such as the recent American

Ten-foot sq. lighting fixtures in main hall, aluminum folding door in background.



Telephone & Telegraph meeting of 17,000 stockholders, about 50% of those attending arrived by public transportation. For other more localized events, such as the recent flower, boat, and auto shows, an average of about 88% of the visitors arrived by car.

The immenseness of McCormick Place has its positive side, however. Events scheduled attract large numbers of visitors, but the gatherings are homogeneous; that is, people with like interests come together for one purpose; the needs of such an homogeneous group can be readily predicted and a method devised to serve those needs. Planning a building of this type presents difficult problems, Lee said, because no clear cut need or function can be easily outlined for the architect, as can be done in the case of the single-function building. The requirements of each event scheduled, while predictable, are nonetheless unique, and demand a carefully engineered method of handling crowds to assure a smoothly running affair. The flexibility of the exposition center's plan enables its personnel to adequately meet the needs of a kaleidoscopic variety of scheduled events.

An example of the ultimate in flexibility is the telephone center of McCormick Place, where the system is contractible as well as expansible. Some events require little telephone service, while others require service for up to 100,000 guests.

Tests Being Conducted

Many tests are being made throughout the building to evaluate such functional characteristics as acoustics, heating, and lighting. For example, tests are being conducted in the theatre to determine the house reverberation time, and to refine the electronic equipment for sound amplification. Lee strongly believes that in our age of electronic marvels, it is no longer necessary for theatre design to be conservative. It is old-fashioned, he implies, to continue to produce theatres with small houses depending on natural acoustics to carry unamplified sound.

Tests have indicated that the high pressure heating system needs to be supplemented to prevent undue air loss. When truck door and entrance doors are opened, air leakage occurs if the wind velocity is greater than 20 m.p.h. In Chicago, where winds of considerable velocity are the rule rather than the exception, air leakage is a major problem in a high pressure heating system. Two possible solutions being considered are the addition of revolving doors, and an air curtain system. Lee emphatically stated that foyers are definitely not an effective wind buffer.

Lee Hits Lighting Effects

Discussing the lighting of McCormick Place, Lee hit hard at the architectural profession. He believes that, by and large, we do not understand lighting effects. As a profession we have developed to a high degree our knowledge and understanding of lighting fixtures and their engineering characteristics, but we ignore the psychological *effects* of lighting. We consider our task done when we have designed a lighting system which provides a certain desired level of brightness suitable for working, reading, or whatever the stated activity. Pointing to his own office as an illustration, Lee noted that we have "spilled light over everything and the result is sameness, monotony." He is "tired of seeing cliches in fixtures all over town!" When asked if he was suggesting a mixture of fluorescent and incandescent fixtures, he replied that that was precisely the problem, "architects are generally looking for a formula." His plea is that we would not seek a formula, a "patent medicine," but rather approach each problem on its own terms, sensitively aware of the psychological implications of lighting.

If allowed to make one suggestion, in all sincerity he would ask architects to "study the lighting effects achieved in the theatre, and in television where lighting is to be seen in a range of grays" with the complication (or enhancement) of color removed. Study of this kind, Lee believes, would alert us to the potential drama inherent in imaginative lighting effects, and enable us to solve our lighting problems more creatively.

When asked for his opinion of the building from an esthetic point of view, Lee replied that, being a strictly functional fellow, he could not capably judge a work of art.

However, in terms of function, he feels strongly that the elegant simplicity of design achieved by the architects is truly an asset, because the building lends itself readily to diverse kinds of atmosphere from rock and roll concerts to grand opera, from box lunches to gourmet feasts. The uncluttered design results in freedom of function, allowing the building to be personalized for each event. Everything "fits" and guests feel at home in McCormick Place. It is a rare pleasure, Lee said, to be able to operate within such a wide and flexible range, and he warmly compliments the architects for their successful solution to a most complex problem. □

Central Controls Provide Efficient Operation

by Philip Derrig

■ McCormick Place, located on the lake front at South 23rd Street in Chicago, is approximately 1100 feet long and 340 feet wide. The entire framework is of structural steel and is set on a network of steel piles. The building is encased with prefabricated insulated concrete panels, except for the entrances, which are constructed with glass panels. The roof is poured Gypsum with built up roofing and a precast insulating ceiling is set on the purlins below the roof slab to provide insulating value as well as a smooth appearance. The heat loss on both walls and roof is 0.20 Btu per hour per square foot per degree F.

The building has approximately 1,000,000 square feet of floor area and may roughly be divided into three principal areas:

(1) The main exposition area,

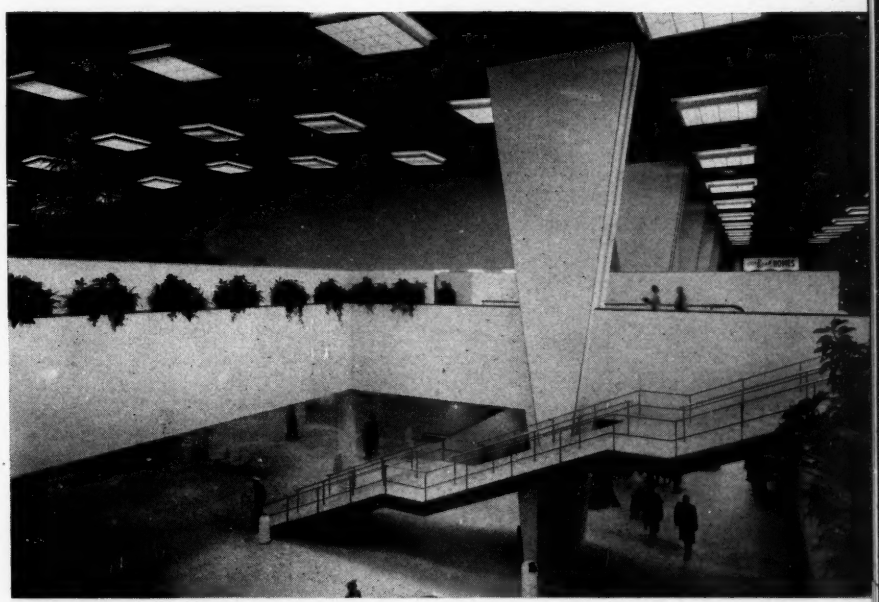
(2) the lower level, and

(3) the 5,000 seat auditorium located at the extreme south end of the structure.

The main exposition floor has approximately 330,000 square feet of floor area and has an average unobstructed clear height of 30 feet. Column spacings are 60 feet center to center in the north-south direction and 210 feet center in the east-west direction.

Year-round air conditioning is provided for the main exposition floor by means of twenty-two air handling units which are located in the truss space below the roof. This arrangement of equipment provides maximum flexibility for comfort conditions. For instance, where the heat gain from one particular exhibit varies greatly from another exhibit in an adjacent area, it is possible to handle the situation effectively by varying the discharge temperatures of the air handling units serving each area. In the event that the main exhibition area is partitioned off by the movable partions mentioned herein before, this system of multiple air handling units can be utilized to provide comfort conditions in either of the three areas as required, or in the case where only one area is occupied, maximum economy of operation can be realized because only the air handling units in that particular area need be operated.

able operating economy because of the reduced quantity of outdoor air required by Code. The Ventilating Code of the City of Chicago normally requires that 1/3 outdoor air be supplied with each system of ventilation, however, if adsorptive type filters are used, this outdoor air requirement can be reduced to 15%. The savings realized by this reduction of air in terms of tons of refrigeration, amounted to approximately 600 tons.



Two-story foyer and one of the stairways connecting the two levels of McCormick Hall. Air handling and other mechanical equipment is placed in area between bottom of trusses and the roof.

Carbon Filters

All of the major air handling units are equipped with automatic roll type filters, an electrostatic type filter, and activated carbon type filters. At the time of construction, this application of carbon type filters, over 900, was one of the largest in the United States. Carbon type filters were included in the design because they effected consider-

The main exhibition area is lighted by means of 10 feet by 10 feet luminaries spaced approximately 30 feet on centers to maintain a 50 foot-candle level. This lighting load amounts to approximately 1100 KW. A system of single phase, 120 V. trolley ducts is installed above the main exhibition floor in the trusses, which provides additional service for flood lighting

and single phase power. Capacity of this system is approximately 1100 KW.

For the convenience of the exhibitors, utility boxes are placed in the floor of the main exhibition area and are located on a module basis. These utility boxes are so arranged to provide electrical, telephone, gas, air, water, drain and low pressure steam services. Also, for the convenience of the exhibitors, vent stacks to atmosphere are located in certain building columns. These vent stacks are capable of handling the products of combustion from a medium sized boiler, exhaust from fume hoods or other types of exhaust air which must be dissipated to the outside.

Access to the main exhibition level for the convenience of exhibitors is available on the West side of the building where a very long truck dock is provided. Access doors approximately 14 feet high are available along this west wall. Unloading facilities for passengers from busses or cars are available at the west side. After unloading, the busses or cars can proceed either north or south to the parking facilities.

In general, the main exhibition area was designed to provide maximum flexibility to accommodate any type or any size of exhibit, to provide a high level of comfort air conditioning with wide variations of heat dissipation due to exhibitors' equipment, to provide maximum flexibility for lighting requirements and to provide a great variety of services for the exhibitors' individual requirements.

The lower level of McCormick Place has many interesting and varied functions. These include lower level entrances to the hall from a taxi and vehicular tunnel which runs full length of the building on the west side, administrative offices, maintenance shops and storage, telephone communication center, approximately 24 meeting rooms, restaurant and kitchen facilities, an art gallery, a small theater or lecture hall with a capacity of 600 people, mechanical equipment rooms, locker rooms and dressing and rehearsal rooms for the large theater.

The underground vehicular tunnel is located on the west side of the building and extends from north to south a distance of approximately 1100 feet. A corridor approximately 20 feet wide is provided adjacent to the vehicular tunnel and serves as a loading or unloading center for taxis, busses and patrons of the parking lots. Figures indicate that approximately 7,000 taxicabs can be loaded or unloaded in a 45 minute period. Ventilation of the vehicular tunnel is accomplished by a series of exhaust fans which exhaust approximately 50,000 CFM or 1 CFM per square foot to establish a satisfactory condition for the ventilation requirements.

The administrative offices, maintenance shops, telephone communication center, central control room, check rooms and other service facilities are located on the east side of the corridor. These areas are heated and cooled by zoned air handling units to maintain comfort conditions as required.

Access to the lower level of the hall is amply provided by means of wide corridors leading thereto. Access to the main exposition level by means of numerous stairways conveniently located is also provided. At the south end of the lower level, a large entrance lobby is flanked on each side by moving stairways which operate at approximately 90 feet per minute.

Central Control

One of the interesting features on the lower level is the central control room which houses the central control panel. This panel is approximately 35 feet long and includes the instruments and gauges for checking, changing and correcting the temperature of practically all systems in the building. Included are stop and start push buttons for all the major portions of the building.

On the east side of the lower level, there are approximately 24 meeting rooms of various sizes, many of which can be expanded to handle medium size exhibits or conventions on a smaller scale. This portion of the building is heated and air conditioned by means of two medium pressure, high velocity double duct systems handling 70,000 CFM each at 5" static pressure. Distribution from the hot and cold main trunk ductwork is accomplished by the use of single electric motor operated constant volume mixing boxes. These mixing boxes are located on a module basis so as to provide numerous individual zoned areas which is consistent with the flexible design usage of the areas served. The low pressure ductwork on the discharge side of the mixing boxes are acoustically lined to meet the NC 35 curve which was established in the design criteria for these areas.

Toward the south on the east side of the lower level are the kitchen, cafeteria and main dining areas. These areas each have an individual system of air handling. The dining areas are air conditioned for comfort cooling. The kitchen is very large and has sufficient facilities to handle over 5000 varied dinner courses per hour. All the kitchen exhaust from hoods, kettles and broilers, etc., are exhausted out through the roof of the building by 14 gauge block iron welded ductwork and fans.

The boiler room, pump room and refrigeration equipment room are located in the southeast corner of the building. The boiler room contains 600 H.P. package type fire tube gas and oil fired forced draft boilers. The underground fuel oil storage tanks are located underground at the south end of the site. There are eight (8) 30,000 gallon capacity fuel oil storage tanks for #6 fuel oil. Each tank is equipped

ART ROOM
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with a thermostatically controlled electric immersion type heater having a capacity of 12 KW at 480 volts. The supply and return fuel oil lines are collected in a header in an underground pump room in which is located the valve manifold for all tanks and the fuel oil pumping set. The fuel oil is then pumped to the Boiler Room for distribution to each burner.

Lots of Water

The refrigeration equipment room contains three electrically driven centrifugal water chillers. Two of the chillers have a nominal capacity of 1500 tons of refrigeration each and the third machine has a nominal capacity of 750 tons. The chilled water system has a total capacity to cool 9,150 GPM of water from 52° F. to 42° F. when supplied with 6,280 GPM of condenser water entering at 75° F. and leaving at 92.5°. Water for condensing is taken from the lake through a 36″ diameter intake pipe, passed through a travelling screen filter to an intake sump located below the equipment room floor. Electrically operated vertical turbine type pumps, pump from the sump, through the condensers and thence back to the lake at a point 100 feet from the intake. The chilled water is distributed through the building by means of electrically driven horizontal split case pumps. One main distribution loop extends from the refrigeration room up to the underside of the trusses and then to each air handling system located on either side of the building. The other main loop extends from the refrigeration room to the ceiling access space under the main exposition floor and then to each air handling system located in the lower level. The steam distribution system essentially follows the same pattern.

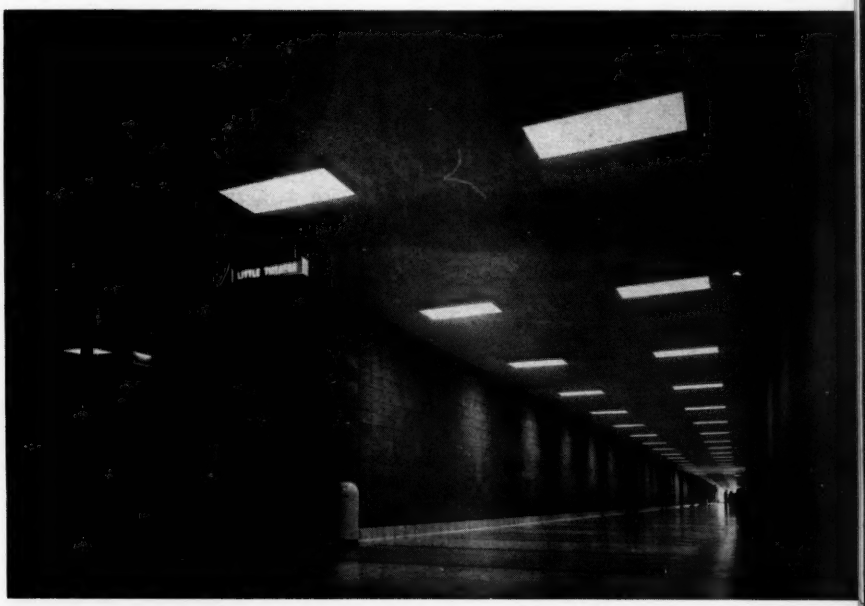
Adjacent to the refrigeration equipment room is the pneumatic water system for domestic use, the related pumping equipment and water heating storage tank heaters.

Under the main exhibition floor in the ceiling access space are located all the utilities for supplying the utility boxes located in the main exhibition floor. These systems are of the loop type and include gas, air, steam, hot and cold water, and drains. A bus duct system of distribution is also arranged to serve each utility box.

A 5,000 seat theater is located at the south end of the building. Approximately 3,000 seats are on the main floor and 2,000 seats are in the balcony. The theater is air conditioned by means of two 75,000 CFM capacity air handling systems located on each side of the theater in the truss areas. The Chicago Ventilating Code requires 30 CFM per seat which amounts to 30 x 5,000 seats = 150,000 CFM. Air is distributed to the space from the main ceiling under the balcony and through the side walls. Because of the low NC design criteria, the duct system velocities were kept below 1000 FPM and, in addition many areas of the ductwork were acoustically lined. The exhaust-recirculation system removes air from the lower side walls, from the ceiling and from the end stanchions of the balcony seats.

The stage of the theater is conditioned by means of two air handling units located on each side and having a capacity each of 24,000 CFM. This system was carefully designed to eliminate any possibility of disturbing the stage curtains and velocities were held to a minimum. Extensive zoned heating elements were installed on the back wall of the stage (this is an outside wall) to prevent any undesirable updrafts.

Consulting mechanical and electrical engineers were John Dolio & Associates of Chicago, Illinois. □



East corridor on lower level gives insight into distances and problems of mechanical distribution of air, water, heat and electricity. Corridor extends from foyer outside main theater at south end of the building to the north entrances. Meeting rooms are located on both sides.

McCormick Place vs Cobo Hall

by Thomas Claridge, AIA

■ Next year, more than 10,000,000 Americans will attend conventions, trade fairs, boat shows, automobile shows, stockholder meetings, public, and promotional presentations; this has grown into a $2,000,000,000 business with every city and metropolitan area desiring a share of this lucrative commerce. With a million and a half visitors next year expecting to spend around $300,000,000 in Chicago's lodging, merchandising, restaurant, and entertainment enterprises, it is no wonder that Chicago was spurred to erect a Convention Hall that would command its share of the nation's commerce.

In the last ten years there has been a steady creation of new Convention Halls integrated with Civic Centers in many of our large metropolitan centers. Detroit has now completed its $100,000,000 Civic Center conceived and guided by the illustrious Saarinen Architects. New York completed its Coliseum in 1956, but this center was not intended for the major scale conventions that were programmed for Chicago or Detroit. Atlanta, Houston, and Fort Worth are also in the planning stages of large Convention Hall-Civic Centers similar to the scale of Chicago's. Thus the design pattern and scope set by the Detroit and Chicago Halls is worthy of a comparative analysis.

Both Chicago and Detroit placed their Halls on bodies of water, adjacent to expressways, near existing Civic Buildings and near the heart of the downtown commercial center of each city. The area of the sites chosen compare favorably with the type of program approved for functioning facilities. Each center's main structure covers approximately 10 acres of ground: Detroit's Cobo Arena portion covers an additional 7 acres due to the program integrating a major sporting arena such as Chicago's Stadium. Due to the location and size, Detroit's Cobo Hall spans the Lodge Expressway as a 3-story structure with underground parking and roof parking. This is approximately the same size as Chicago's McCormick Place, a 4-story structure with outdoor parking covering an additional 20 acres of ground.

The "Design Key" in convention halls is the amount of space, flexibility of space, and functioning of space allocated to the housing of multipurpose convention or trade fairs simultaneously, or separately. This calls for a broad range of special spaces or halls that can be used singularly or multiply opened into one great hall to house the largest conceivable convention or function.

The Great Halls of Cobo and McCormick Place are almost identical in the space layout and functioning aspects. Each center has allowed for a main Great Hall of approximately 300,000 square feet which can be separated by folding doors into three smaller halls of 100,000 square feet each. Each has a clear ceiling height of 30 feet and floor design load of 400 lbs. per square foot. Cobo Hall has one additional smaller hall of 100,000 sq. ft. below the great main hall with a smaller ceiling height of 18'6" and a floor load of 600 lbs. per sq. ft. at the level as approached from the river front road and park. Contrasting Cobo's extra hall, McCormick Place has an Auditorium with seating for 5,000 persons that will be used by trade organizations for general meetings. But when they are not there, the Auditorium will not be idle. At any given time you might find opera, ballet, or stage shows being presented there.

In addition to the main theatre, a small theatre or assembly hall for 500 persons is adjacent to the Lobby and Art Gallery. Cobo Hall has excluded the theatre space in its program because of the construction of the Edsel Ford Auditorium across the street from the County City Building in the Civic Center. This auditorium will handle the equivalent program that McCormick theatre will. Each center has a considerable number of smaller meeting rooms for banquet purposes or for smaller groups; Cobo Hall has 32 such rooms, capable of seating from 80 persons to 1250, surrounding the great hall and the smaller hall D on the second and third floors, while the McCormick Place has 23 meeting rooms on the 1st floor with a capacity of 200 to 2,000 persons apart from the great hall on the second floor. This arrangement allows the meeting rooms to be concentrated on one floor in one area that can be easily found and accessible to the public and accessible to the kitchen and servicing facilities, for intimate dining and for large banquets. The placement of meeting rooms adjacent to the main hall in the Cobo center allow caucases and small meetings while large conventions are going on: thus each center has made design function decisions dependent on the type of operation that the center is catering to.

Lots of Food

The functioning of the kitchen operation in each center to feed 5,000 people at one sitting in the Main Banquet hall is most interesting. While the guests are being seated at the 500 odd tables, trucks will cart the hot and cold food from the kitchens into two elevators and up to the banquet area. As the trucks are parked at four peripheral sites, creating four mobile kitchens, 260 waiters and 10 captains will serve the entree in 15 minutes. The trucks, electrically heated or refrigerated will keep the food fresh; a dinner of this proportion will take one and a half hours to serve. Each center has a cafe-

teria that will service approximately 1500 to 1800 persons per hour, or at one sitting depending on the reservation of the function. McCormick Place has 17 banquet or dining rooms with capacities of 20 to 1300 in addition to a restaurant that has a capacity to feed 500 persons per hour.

As Chicago has a Stadium that is already a sport center while Detroit actually lacked a first class stadium, Cobo Hall's program included the Arena building that is expected to be completed in the early summer of this year. This latter portion is a circular building which will be joined to the Cobo Hall southeast corner on three floors. This arena will seat about 12,500 persons and have a removable stage 40 feet wide and 40 feet deep. It will have 9,600 permanent seats in three levels in a horseshore arrangement. The structure will be 315 feet in diameter and about 100 feet high. In this arena, the space for staging spectacles is a flat, clear span, concrete floor of 23,500 square feet. It will also have team as well as individual, dressing rooms. The floor may be used for sporting events, such as basketball and boxing, and is equipped with refrigeration apparatus to convert it into an iced area for skating, hockey, ice shows.

While parking for the McCormick Place is open, 2,500 cars to the South, 500 to the North, and 4,500 cars in Soldier Field; Cobo Hall has indoor garage parking, 400 cars to the west of the structure, 418 east, and 1,150 cars on the roof. Additional parking is the 700 underground parking of the Edsel Ford Auditorium and the parking lots handling 4,000 cars surrounding the Civic Center. As Cobo Hall spans the Lodge Expressway, it is possible to come off the expressway and go up to the roof on the spiral parking ramp or to the under ground garage directly. This system is far superior to the parking of McCormick Place where one has to walk two city blocks in the dead of Winter with the breeze off the Lake to get to an entrance. Certainly the convenience of the public patrons was overlooked when the scheme was approved. Or was this decision of open lot parking one made from the necessity of economics? This could be a contributable factor in attendance to shows in winter time; it could even be a contributable factor in losing conventions and trade shows to Detroit's Cobo Hall. Only time and attendance statistics will tell the answers to these questions.

This is one of the restaurants open to the public in McCormick Hall.

However, in final comparison, Detroit's Cobo Hall and Chicago's McCormick Place are by far the most outstanding Convention Halls yet erected and will remain so until other halls patterned after these two will be completed. Competition will then be keen for a share of the billions spent each year by the promotional trades, but Chicago has received its share in the past and with the addition of McCormick Place will do so in the future. □

McCormick Hall's theater is one of the largest in the country. It can be entered from both the lower (meeting room) level and from the exhibit hall.

Robert Ahlstrom Photo

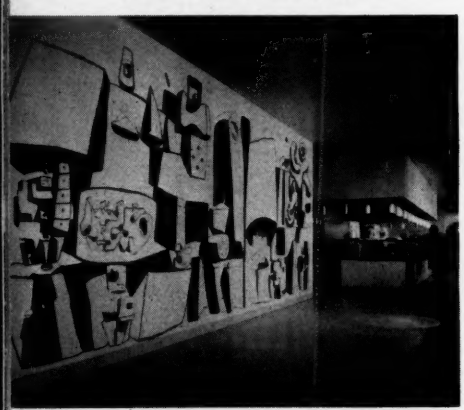
McCormick Place Art Gallery has traditional soft lighting and facilities to show paintings, statuary, photographs and other exhibits.

Inland Art — McCormick Place

by

Richard G. Lundgoot, AIA

Nivolo's art on the outside of the building is matched by murals on the interior. There are several murals in the meeting roms. This one is on the interior wall of the cafeteria.



■ McCormick Place is unusual in contemporary architecture in the great amount of emphasis placed on art on both its interior and exterior walls. The largest sculptured building in the world, its exterior walls boast more sculpture than even the temples of antiquity, and its generous interior art gallery places high its potential for becoming a cultural center.

Exterior Art. The decision to use the sculptured exterior wall panels was made in the process of solving an architectural problem. It was necessary to eliminate sunlight from the interior of the building because this would wash out the artificial lighting effects for exhibits. In an effort to avoid the boxlike effect that the simple elimination of windows would produce, the architects decided to face the building with sculptured concrete panels, making every fourth panel sculptured and set back, and thus providing rhythm and relief.

Constantino Nivola was hired to execute the job. Nivola and a dozen helpers completed in less than two years time 2,010 wall panel sections containing 152,000 square feet of sculptured and geometric design patterns in bas relief.

Nivola had done similar work on a smaller scale and was thus acquainted with the general procedure he was to follow. The 16′ x 50′ panels were cast in eleven separate sections, each 16′ x 4½′. A form was made and filled with wet sand and Nivola stepped into it to create his sand sculpture designs with trowel and hands. The designs had to be sculptured in reverse so a mold could be made from the sand sculpture. Keeping the sand wet until the mold could be poured was one of the problems encountered. From the mold the actual pouring of the concrete took place, using the necessary wire mesh or steel reinforcing bars, in addition to insulation. After cleaning, the precast concrete panels were trucked to the building site.

The sculpture is protected against freezing-thawing damage by a coat of silicone water repellant, applied after the panels had dried, which should reduce water absorption damage by 80%. The silicone should also prevent dirt from getting into the pores.

Interior Art. A part of the vast floor area of McCormick Place is devoted to an art gallery. This space measures approximately 50′ x 150′ and includes 360 lineal feet of wall space, making it possible to hang sixty paintings at one time. As the second largest non-commercial gallery in Chicago, it will serve as an adjunct to the Art Institute.

The prime purpose of the Gallery is to obtain collections and exhibits that are not available to other galleries. The gallery will not own a permanent collection, but will display traveling exhibits being shown in various parts of the United States and Europe, as well as private collections. An average of fourteen shows a year will be exhibited along with a lecture program and gallery tours. Whenever possible, an attempt will be made to relate the gallery shows to what is being shown in the exhibit areas, using all the art forms, e.g., painting, etching, sculpture, crafts, etc.

E. R. Hunter is the gallery curator. Formerly the director of the Dade County Art Museum in Miami, Florida, he states that he took his present position partly because of the very uniqueness of the McCormick Place gallery. Guided by an advisory committee, Hunter is endeavoring to bring to the gallery a sense of purpose and excellence in its art exhibits, lectures and general administration. He hopes that the gallery can contribute to the efforts being made to make McCormick Place a cultural center.

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Central Illinois Comment

a column about Central Illinois Chapter matters and members by Edward L. Verkler, AIA, Peoria.

Public relations activities in our area are definitely on the increase—a fact which should be good news to Central Illinois architects. One facet of this multiple head dragon is in the Exhibit and Awards area. The Executive Committee has spent considerable time discussing the possibility of an Honor Awards program for our Chapter. Due to the successful operation on a national level and within many chapters, we feel it to be of prime importance. It is the general feeling that such a program should have a primary function of obtaining professional publicity in our area. Secondary function would be the honoring of an individual or firm, in connection with work done. The mechanics and achievements of such a program become increasingly difficult to solve when the benefits, of necessity, must be spread over six or seven major population areas. I suspect we will have to rely on the old standby, and establish a committee to investigate and report to the membership.

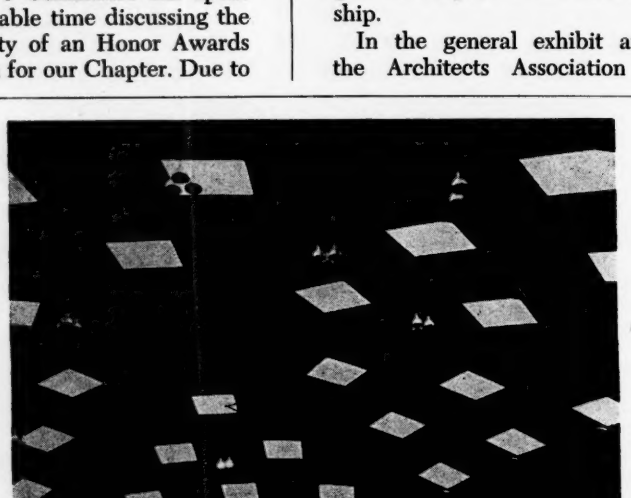
In the general exhibit area, the Architects Association of Peoria has its first Annual Exhibit scheduled for the 12th of May. The success or failure of this effort will be a fact long before this issue of Inland Architect is published. Even if the Exhibit fails to attract much attention from the people of our area, the fact that eleven architectural firms have pulled together to create an exhibit is a major accomplishment.

"Public Relations" for our profession are two words which a few architects have a great deal to say about—but I am convinced a great majority do not really understand. Certainly, architectural schools, to my knowledge, have nothing to say about public relations, at least not directly. True, the background is there, hidden in our educational and professional training. I think it takes a rather broad minded approach at architecture to realize this and to recognize the need.

Education Important

I am certainly no expert on public relations. However, I am not convinced that public relations per se, is a complete answer. Public education is just as important. Possibly this is actually part of public relations. Public education, in my mind, creates a different approach to the problem. Public relations work involves the selling or promotion of the profession of architecture and architects to the general public. A secondary result is the promotion of our end product—good architecture. But how do we promote good architecture to someone who is not trained to recognize the good from the bad? I agree that many people do appreciate good architecture, but ride up and down the major thoroughfares of our cities and tell me if this is the majority. Obviously not!

The great American dollar and the "I can get it wholesale" attitude, have influenced the very roots of our culture. All the arts have suffered from this attitude, and with some exceptions, I personally can see no improvement now, or in the immediate future. Walter Gropius, in a talk at Columbia University, expressed this



Physical Education Center, Wayland (Mass.) Senior High School, The Architects Collaborative, Cambridge, Mass.

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same view, and I quote: "It is the people as a whole who have stopped thinking of what would constitute a better frame of life for them and who have, instead, learned to sell themselves short to a system of rapid turnover and minor creature comforts. It is the lack of a distinct and compelling goal rather than bad intentions of individuals that so often ruins attempts of a more comprehensive character to general planning and sacrifices them bit by bit to the conventional quick profit motive."

This statement was quoted by Joseph Watterson, AIA Journal Editor, on the Editor's Page of the May issue, and he went on to say: "A people who want more glittering tail fins as the highest expression of status would be a people who would also look to their environment, cherish it, and demand from the planning professions that they be given something much better than acres of shoddiness relieved by an occasional tinselly glass front. A genuine desire for the good life, high goals, come from a people nurtured on well-balanced standards to begin with. It takes more than material prosperity to produce an age of architectural maturity; it takes a people brought to completeness of intellectual growth and development—mature clients."

Need for Public Relations

How do we increase the desire for good art, painting, sculpture and architecture without education? Teaching future generations the basic concepts of good design in all fields of art is relatively simple, provided we can develop a curriculum beginning in grade school and provide teachers capable of producing good results. But how do we teach, train, produce or sell the fundamentals of good design to the average promoter, real estate man, banker, contractor, journalist, potential owner and many others, even including the building tradesmen? If we think about this, how can anyone in our profession say we do not need public relations – to promote not only architects but architecture and allied arts.

I doubt if many readers of this column have read the 1961 Boards' Annual Report of The American Institute of Architects. A small section under the division of Public Affairs, entitled "Public Relations," contains some rather interesting information. Mr. Robert R. Denny of Henry J. Kaufman & Associates, the Institute's public relations counsel, was concerned with how effectively the program was working at the local level and quoted the following results from a survey of our Chapters:

77 percent mount a local publicity effort;

43 percent now have established speakers' bureaus;

20 percent do some work on radio-TV;

29 percent participate in local homebuilders' shows;

19 percent give home design awards;

18 percent 'best draftsman' awards;

34 percent hold 'get acquainted' meetings with legislators;

55 percent work in community redevelopment projects;

68 percent use AIA-produced films;

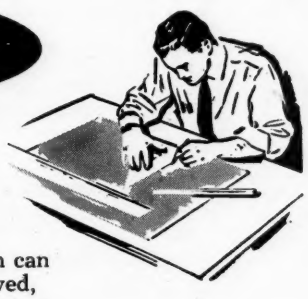
68 percent use AIA-produced literature (an average of 2.46 pieces);

20 percent of Chapter public relations chairmen reported that they had attended AIA Regional public relations workshops; and

79 percent replied to a multiple choice question that public understanding of the profession has improved.

How many architects in our Chapter area have actually participated in, or promoted any of the above public relations activities? Many of these efforts cannot be done on a Central Illinois Chapter basis, but must be done on a community basis. And many can be done on a firm or individual basis. I think it is imperative that all of us think about where we have been and more important, where we are going. When we do, we have the fundamental knowledge to evaluate the effectiveness of these activities.

teamwork



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Newly Elected Associate Member

GERALD JAMES GRETHEN

Born: September 2, 1936. Education: Bachelor of Architecture University of Illinois. At present, draftsman for Gustav Braun - Architects.

RALPH DONALD JOHNSON

Born: December 17, 1939, Aurora, Illinois. At the present time he is working as a draftsman for Quinn & Christiansen. He won the Ricker Prize while attending the University of Illinois.

Directory Correction

Change of address for William R. Reed, AIA, 619 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago 11, Illinois, MIchigan 2-4242.

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LETTERS

DEAR EDITOR:

In the light of the preservation and restoration projects which are coming to our attention these days, it is very refreshing to see the ingenuity and care shown in the proportions of mass, the variety of materials and interesting details in these early structures in the vertical pattern. There is overwhelming evidence of the architect's concern for human interest, love of beauty and the nature of the human beings who go in and out each day.

It is hard to believe we really enjoy our new management mausoleums of metal, glass, marble and tile. How cold and impersonal can we get?

Some observations that are puzzling: If the exterior walls were thinned down to gain extra rental space inside, do the leaks, heat losses and extra air-conditioning load costs plus drapery costs and washing routines still prove economical for the owner?

Are the neighbors pleased with the reflections from a nearby glass or shiny metal wall?

Does a transparent skin prove that humans like to be watched while they perform their daily routines?

This does not suggest we revert to Garricks, Republics, or Monadnocks—they were inspired specimens of an early time. The junk of that day has gone, or if it still stands, it leaves no impression of beauty today. What do we have today that will be worthy of restoration or preservation for future generations? Obviously, no positive answer can be given, as time is the proof of such things. We will have a better chance of being remembered favorably if we keep our sympathy for the human occupant in front of us as we create.

It would seem that buildings to house humans should be human in feeling. It is done in the better homes and churches—why not in our five-days-a-week stacks of cubicles? What has submerged our creative efforts into cold skins—economics, speed, inertia?

It has been said that not admiring something new indicates we don't understand it. We don't buy this rebuttal. Either there is not much to comprehend or there is a great deal missing, which omission is hard to understand.

Let's not add any more poor design to what we already have. Enough is too much.

D. CARR WHITEHEAD

A Few Pats On The Back

by R. L. Lindgren, Vice President, Gust K. Newberg Construction Co.

■ McCormick Place, a notable civic project recently completed on the Chicago lake-front, has to date gathered to its credit a tremendous amount of publicity releases covering every facet of its operations, materials and equipment used in the construction. This leaves one in doubt if there are words remaining to further enhance the reputation of this project.

We, as general contractors, believe one more word could be used and that is "LABOR." Labor of the mind to envision, plan and design, and labor of the hands to put the results of this planning and designing into place were required. This combination of labor effort constituted, in our opinion, the construction team.

We believe that the Metropolitan Fair and Exposition Authority had on its team all the "big league" talent that the Chicagoland could offer.

The Chief Architect, Alfred Shaw, and his notable associates, Gust K. Newberg, General Contractor, all the subcontractors, material men, the various construction trade labor organizations and other public spirited individuals, civic or otherwise combined together to put over this project.

As all business men know success does not come easy. The project presented many problems of every nature and as each arose they were disposed of without leaving a bad mark.

The end result is what counts, and the Gust K. Newberg Construction Company takes pride in being one member of this "construction team." □

ADDENDUM

Fire Safety In Schools

Automatic Sprinklers were reported to be among the best safety devices available for life safety in schools. Automatic detection devices, as currently manufactured, were reported to be erratic and not dependable at a meeting held Wednesday, May 10th at McCormick Place in Chicago by Fire Marshall Raymond Hill of Los Angeles. The meeting at which the Chief gave his report was attended by nearly 1000 fire protection engineers, educators, architects, fire department officials and insurance men. It was sponsored by the National Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Control Association.

This was Chief Hill's first public report of his experiment 'Operation School Burning II.' This second series of tests Chief Hill reported was set up to "test

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the things that weren't tested in Operation School Burning I." The second series of tests which involved setting and studying fires set in an actual school building was aimed at testing such things as sprinkler head spacing, effectiveness of sprinklers in various sized rooms, in rooms of various types of construction or application, and the effects of various types of fires. Emphasizing the life safety concept as opposed to the property safety concept, Chief Hill first timed students at fire drills to determine time criterias for effective fire control.

From results of tests set up to determine whether or not detectors will give enough time for the children to get out of the building, the Chief came to the conclusion that detectors are not the answer. From similar tests set up to determine effectiveness of automatic sprinklers he found them to be reliable and effective in controlling fires of all types.

In both tests many of the conditions that prevailed in "Chicago's Our Lady of Angels' Fire" were matched. The conclusion was that the installation of sprinklers in all older school buildings similar in construction to that of the "Lady of Angels' Building" is the most effective way to insure safety for the school children. Officials representing the parochial schools in Chicago who visited the testing site have expressed agreement with this conclusion. John Alschuler, of Friedman, Alschuler and Sincere, who is chairman of a committee developing a new "Life Safety Code of Illinois School Children," stated that the conclusions reached will have a far reaching effect on the code now being developed and on the construction of schools in Illinois for some time to come. This committe, established by the State Department of Public Instruction and the Illinois Building Industry Alliance, has been working on the development of a new "Life Safety Code" since shortly after the "Lady of Angels Fire."

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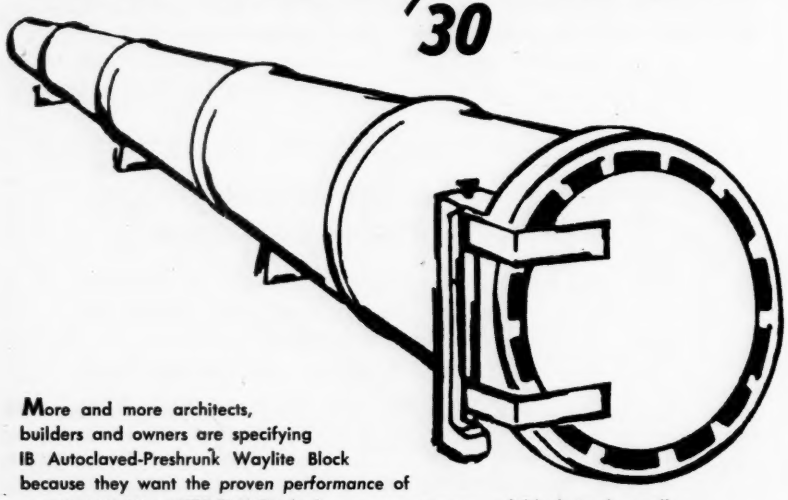

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Oak Park Corporate Member Dies

Edward E. Probst, 922 Columbian Avenue, Oak Park died recently at the age of 64. Mr. Probst was an architect with the firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White for many years before his recent retirement. His father was the last original member of the architectural firm who was responsible for building the Merchandise Mart, the Civic Opera House, Union Station, the Post Office, the Shedd Aquarium, the Adler Planetarium, and other Chicago landmarks.

Brick and Tile Makers Appoint Representative

Willard W. Dikeman of New York City was recently named Architectural Representative for the Structural Clay Products Institute.

Dikeman's appointment is part of an increased emphasis by SCPI on its liaison with architects who work on a national level. Dikeman will work closely with architects in New York, Chicago and Detroit.

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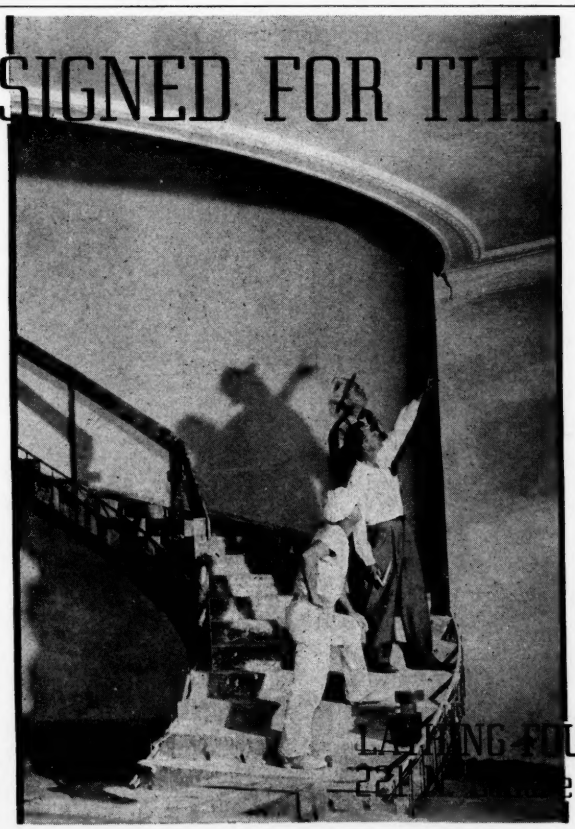

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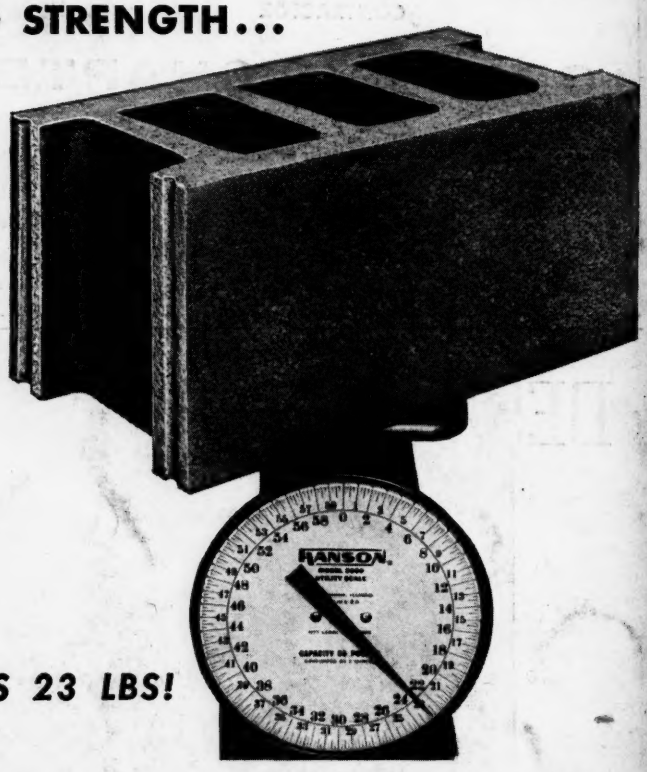

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